



That every wight gan on hem shoute,
And for to laughe as they were wode;
Such game fonde they in hir hode.

HO com another companye,
That had ydoon the traiterye,
The harm, the gretest wikkednesse
That any herte couthe gesse;
And preyed hir to han good fame,
And that she nolde hem doon no shame,
But yeve hem loos and good renoun,
And do hit blowe in clarioun.

Nay, wis! quod she, hit were a vyce;
At be ther in me no justyce,
Me listeth not to do hit now,
Ne this nil I not graunte yow.

HO come ther lepinge in a route,
And gonne choppen al aboute
Every man upon the croune,
That al the halle gan to sounne,
And seyden: Lady, lefe and dere,
We ben swich folk as ye mowe here.
To tellen al the tale aright,
We ben shrewes, every wight,
And han delyt in wikkednes,
As gode folk han in goodnes;
And joye to be knownen shrewes,
And fulle of vyce and wikked thewes;

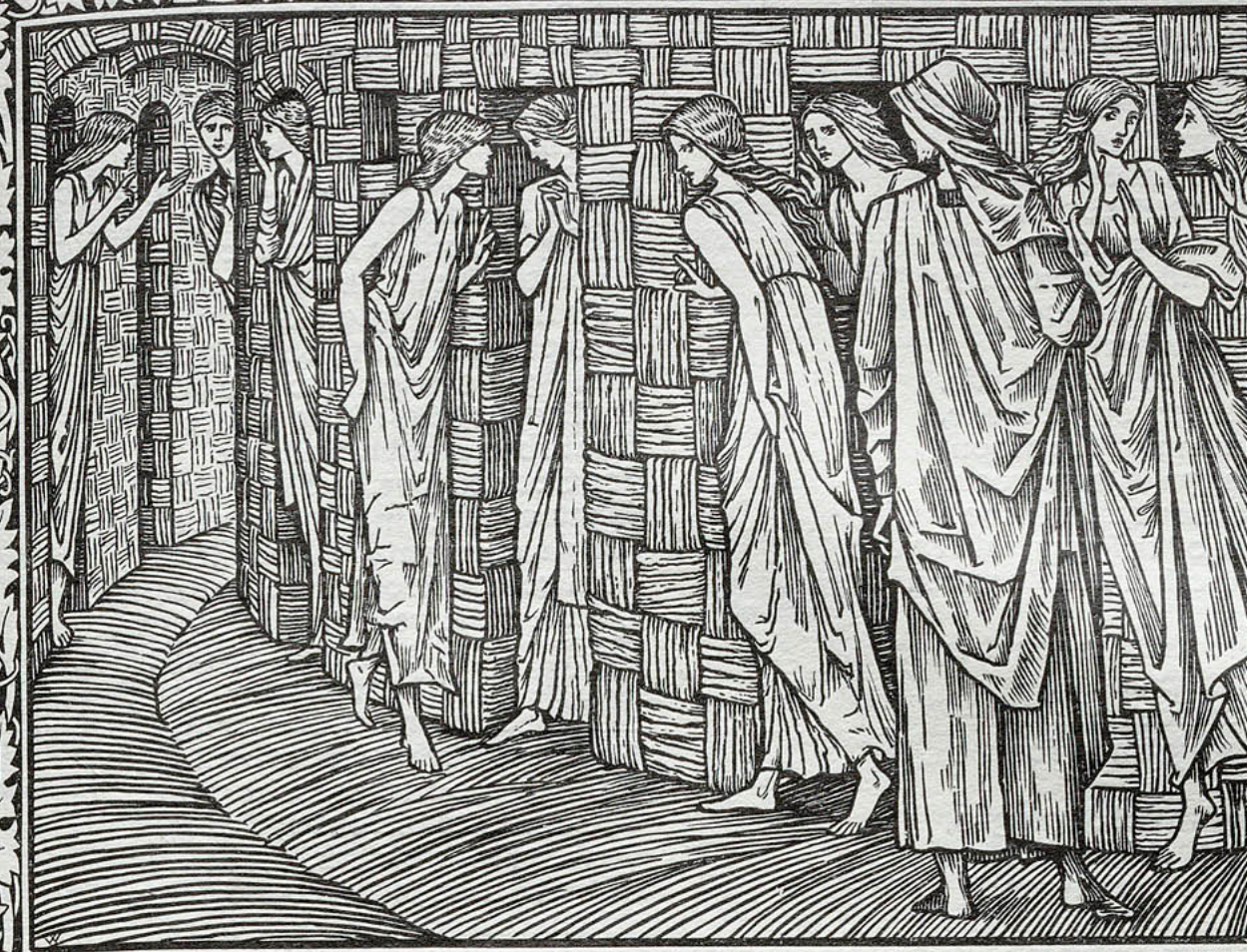
Wherfor we preyen yow, a rowe,
That our fame swich be knowe
In alle thing right as hit is.

GRACUNTE hit yow, quod she, ywis,
But what art thou that seyst this tale,
That werest on thy hose a pale,
And on thy tipet swiche a belle!

Madame, quod he, sooth to telle,
I am that ilke shrewe, ywis,
That brende the temple of Isidis
In Athenes, lo, that citee.

And wherfor didest thou so? quod she,
By my thrift, quod he, madame,
I wolde fayn han had a fame,
As other folk hadde in the toun,

Althogh they were of greet renoun
for hir vertu and for hir thewes;
Thoughte I, as greet a fame han shrewes,
Thogh hit be but for shrewednesse,
As gode folk han for goodnesse;
And sith I may not have that oon,
That other nil I noght forgoon.
And for to gette of fames hyre,
The temple sette I al afyre.
Now do our loos be blownen swythe,
As wisly be thou ever blythe.
Gladly, quod she; thou Eolus,



herestow not what they preyen us?

Madame, yis, ful wel, quod he,
And I wil trumphen hit, pardee!
And tok his blakke trumpe faste,
And gan to puffen and to blaste,
Til hit was at the worldes ende.

WICH that I gan aboute wende;
for oon that stood right at my bak,
Me thoughte, goodly to me spak,
And seyde: frend, what is thy name?
Artow come hider to han fame?

Nay, forsothe, frend! quod I;
I cam noght hider, graunt mercy!
for no swich cause, by my heed!
Suffyeth me, as I were deed,
That no wight have my name in honde.

I woot myself best how I stonde;
for what I drye or what I thinke,
I wol myselfen al hit drinke,
Certeyn, for the more part,
As ferforth as I can myn art.
But what dost thou here than? quod he.
Quod I: That wol I tellen thee,
The cause why I stonde here:
Som newe tydings for to lere:
Som newe thynges, I not what,
Tydings, other this or that,

Of love, or swiche thynges glade,
for certeynly, he that me made
To comen hider, seyde me,
I shulde bothe here and see,
In this place, wonder thynges;
But these be no swiche tydings
As I mene of. No? quod he.

And I answerde: No, pardee!
for wel I wiste, ever yit,
Sith that first I hadde wit,
That som folk han desyred fame
Dyversly, and loos, and name;
But certeynly, I niste how
Ne wher that fame dwelte, er now;
Ne eek of hir descripcioun,
Ne also hir condicioun,
Ne the ordre of hir dome,
Unto the tyme I hider come.

Whiche be, lo, these tydings,
That thou now thus hider bringes,
That thou hast herd? quod he to me;
But now, no fors; for wel I see
What thou desyrest for to here.
Com forth, and stond no longer here,
And I wol thee, withouten drede,
In swich another place lede,
Ther thou shalt here many oon.